575 The societies known as Little Birds, Mosquitoes, and
[883] Doves are not really bands of the All Comrades, but are societies among the boys and young men in imitation of the
[178] *I-kun-uh'-kah-tsi*, but of comparatively recent origin. Men not more than fifty years old can remember when these societies came into existence. Of all the societies of the *I-kun-uh'-kah-tsi*, the Sin'-o-pah, or Kit-fox band, has the strongest medicine. This corresponds to the Horns society among the Bloods. They are the same band with different names. They have certain peculiar secret and sacred ceremonies, not to be described here.

The society of the Stum'-iks, or Bulls, became obsolete more than fifty years ago. Their dress was very fine,—bulls' heads and robes.

575 The members of the younger society purchased individu-
424 ally, from the next older one, its rights and privileges, pay-
432 ing horses for them. For example, each member of the Mosquitoes would purchase from some member of the Braves his right of membership in the latter society. The man who has sold his rights is then a member of no society, and if he wishes to belong to one, must buy into the one next
● [887] higher. Each of these societies kept some old men as members, and these old men acted as messengers, orators, and so on.

575 The change of membership from one society to another
[344] was made in the spring, after the grass had started. Two, three, or more lodge coverings were stretched over poles, making one very large lodge, and in this the ceremonies accompanying the changes took place.

575 In later times, the Braves were the most important and
625 best known of any of the All Comrades societies. The members of this band were soldiers or police. They were the constables of the camp, and it was their duty to preserve
689 order, and to punish offenders. Sometimes young men
522 would skylark in camp at night, making a great noise when

5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

753 consumption, hemorrhages, and diseases of the digestive
[775] organs. Mice, frogs, snakes, and tailed batrachians are said
[825] to cause much disease among women, and hence should be shunned, and on no account handled.

752 Less important external ailments and hurts, such as ulcers,
757 boils, sprains, and so on, are treated by applying various lotions or poultices, compounded by boiling or macerating certain roots or herbs, known only to the person supplying them. Rheumatic pains are treated in several ways. Sometimes the sweat lodge is used, or hot rocks are applied over the place where the pain is most severe, or actual cautery is practised, by inserting prickly pear thorns in the flesh, and setting fire to them, when they burn to the very point.

755 The sweat lodge, so often referred to, is used as a
757 curative agent, as well as in religious ceremonies, and is
343 considered very beneficial in illness of all kinds. The
354 sweat lodge is built in the shape of a rough hemisphere, three or four feet high and six or eight in diameter. The frame is usually of willow branches, and is covered with cowskins and robes. In the centre of the floor, a small hole is dug out, in which are to be placed red hot stones. Everything being ready, those who are to take the sweat remove their clothing and crowd into the lodge. The hot rocks are then handed in from the fire outside, and the cowskins pulled down to the ground to exclude any cold air.
[782] If a medicine pipe man is not at hand, the oldest person
[887] present begins to pray to the Sun, and at the same time sprinkles water on the hot rocks, and a dense steam rises, making the perspiration fairly drip from the body. Occasionally, if the heat becomes too intense, the covering is
755 raised for a few minutes to admit a little air. The sweat
757 bath lasts for a long time, often an hour or more, during
[782] which many prayers are offered, religious songs chanted, and several pipes smoked to the Sun. As has been said, the
[772] sweat lodge is built to represent the Sun's own lodge or

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

[ca. 1850] THE STAFF OF LIFE

A century ago Alfred Vaughan aptly termed the buffalo the Blackfoot Indians' "staff of life."[2] Surely the great number and variety of uses for that animal justified that characterization.

Buffalo supplied a tasty, easily digested, nourishing, year-round food for Indians of all ages. Blackfoot mothers gave their infants choice pieces of meat to suck. Toothless old people sucked the juices in the same way. Many Indians preferred the tongue and ribs. A soup made from buffalo fat and berries mixed with buffalo blood was a favorite dessert at Blackfoot feasts. Several parts of the animal were devoured during butchering, without benefit of cookery. On a buffalo hunt near Fort Union in the summer of 1843 the famous naturalist John James Audubon was appalled when the handsome, refined Blood Indian wife of Alexander Culbertson requested that the skull of a fallen beast be broken open so that she could eat its brains.[3] She was just following the custom of her people, who also enjoyed raw buffalo liver, kidneys, soft nose gristle, and marrow from the leg bones. Older men ate the raw testicles with relish, claiming this food made them healthy and virile. The cheeselike contents of the intestines of newborn calves killed in the spring was a delicacy to the aged of both sexes.

Fresh buffalo meat was cooked by roasting or boiling. Ribs usually were roasted on coals or on wooden spits. A dish known as Crow-guts was prepared by cleaning a section of the small intestine, turning it fat side in and stuffing it with a long, thin strip of meat, then roasting it. The intestine of a large buffalo cow or bull was cleaned, one end tied, filled with blood, and the other end tied. After it was boiled in water, pieces were cut off like sausage. Marrow fat was boiled. When the water cooled and the fat rose to the surface, it was skimmed off and stored in buffalo-skin sacks.

When meat was plentiful, large quantities of the lean flesh were cut into long, thin strips and dried in the sun on racks of poles. The dried meat was packed in buffalo rawhide envelopes

[2] Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1858, 435.
[3] Maria Audubon (ed.), *Audubon and his Journals*, II, 111.

9: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1955 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

south of the Missouri in the Judith Basin. The next winter's hunt was unsuccessful. Richard Sanderville claimed the last wild buffalo in the Blackfoot Country were killed by a party of Piegan hunters near the Sweetgrass Hills in 1884.

The contemporary observations (quoted above) confirm the claims of my aged informants that buffalo were plentiful in the Blackfoot Country in their youth (the late 1860's and early 1870's). As Hornaday's historical map of the extermination of the buffalo graphically illustrates, the Blackfoot Country was the last buffalo hunting ground of the Plains Indians (Hornaday, 1889).

BLACKFOOT USES OF THE BUFFALO

Nearly a century ago Indian Agent Vaughan wrote that the buffalo was "the staff of life" of the Blackfoot (U. S. Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1858, p. 435). Frequent repetition of this phrase has not dulled its essential truth. Throughout their known history the Blackfoot have shown a striking preference for the meat of a single animal. Their current desire for beef, almost to the exclusion of any other meat, probably is a survival from the days when the buffalo was their common food. Not only did they consume it in great quantities but a number of the parts were avidly devoured during butchering, without benefit of cookery. These were the liver, brains, kidneys, the soft gristle of the nose, the blood, and the marrow from leg bones. Older men ate the testicles raw, claiming they made them healthy and virile. The contents of the intestines of newborn calves were considered delicacies for the aged of both sexes. An informant spoke of this food as "the Indians' cheese." All fleshy parts of the buffalo were cooked, although the Blackfoot showed a decided preference for the tongue and ribs. Buffalo figured prominently in the diet of Blackfoot Indians of all ages. As Maximilian (1906, vol. 23, p. 133) noted in 1833, Blackfoot mothers gave infants choice pieces of buffalo meat to suck. Toothless old people sucked the juices in the same way. Quantities of dried meat and pemmican were pounded for winter use. In times of food scarcity even the grease-soaked bags which had contained fat or pemmican were eaten to stave off starvation.

The nonfood uses of the buffalo in Blackfoot material culture were more numerous than any previously published list of the many uses of this animal by Indians of the Plains would indicate. Therefore, I have listed these uses below. This list includes only items mentioned by informants in the course of my specialized field studies of aspects of Blackfoot material culture. A more exhaustive search for rare usages probably would increase this list of some 87 items to more than 100. This list serves to illustrate not only Blackfoot dependence upon the buffalo but also their ingenuity in utilizing buffalo products.

12: Hanks & Richardson E,P&S (1938, 1939) 1966
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot

war deeds and political authority being equal, would ordinarily not join a war expedition led by one who was his junior. Among war chiefs who had already made their major coups, seniority was as important a factor in prestige as the number of major coups.

Unlike the Pawnee and the Comanche one's prestige did not decline after the last war deed. War was understood as a means for acquiring wealth, and if one were already wealthy, status could be maintained in certain spheres without war deeds. Once one had built an adequate herd of horses, there was no humiliation for those who preferred to remain in camp. Moreover, after renouncing warfare, one might gain further prestige. Ceremonial life was another form of competition with property as one of the stakes; a man surpassed another by paying more for an article of ceremonial importance or by acquiring more sacred articles. The tribal chiefs themselves were usually older men who had already distinguished themselves as warriors. Having given up the war path, they settled with their large herds of horses to help their relatives and thus established their positions as leaders in civil life. In this status of leader a man with less wealth and fewer coups might surpass a man with a finer war record who had greater wealth but less generosity. Above all, the mere fact of having grown old was regarded with respect, for one must have power in order to grow old. Hence, it was any dignified old man who with his liaisons to supernatural powers said prayers for the departing warriors. In fact, they prayed that the young man who offered them a pipe would have a long life and many children.

The general structure of the age societies exemplifies this pattern still further. The societies such as the Bees and the Prairie Chickens were entered by many young men, required little outlay of wealth for membership and served mainly for display, recreation, and solidifying the bonds between comrades. Those high in the hierarchy of age societies such as the members of the Catchers and the Horn societies were necessarily older men of sufficient wealth to pay a relatively high price for admission. Hence the group of members was not large. In addition these societies were entrusted with legal authority, based in part on the supernatural power which membership gave them. We thus see again the tendency to associate with age both authority and supernatural power. Though the Crazy Dogs, lying about midway in the hierarchy of age societies, might sing the old Plains song, "We do not want to become old," this was sung perhaps more in derision of their "enemy society" than as an expression of the desire to die young.

Within the residence group any remarks on authority must be prefaced by the observation that the smaller units were in the final analysis autonomous. Each household unit was free to move any place it desired at the will of the man who was head. Among the households that coalesced into

778 783 824 paraphernalia. It was chewed in ceremonies involving prolonged fasting as a means of extended endurance. Sweet grass was used generally by everyone as incense with daily prayers.

846 824 783 *An occasion for the use of sweet grass---one that was somewhat outside* the bundle system but nevertheless of great importance---was the return of a woman with her newborn child. Traditionally, a woman would remain apart from her husband for about thirty-four days after giving birth. Just [887] before returning home she would be assisted by a woman so old she could have no more children. A complete set of new clothes was laid out for the mother. While this was being done the mother bathed in water scented with sweet grass. A smudge was prepared, and when the mother had finished bathing she covered herself with a robe and stood over the incense from the smudge. Then her new clothes were held to the smudge four times before she was [302] allowed to put them on. Her face, arms, and feet were ochred red. She was now considered to be completely cleansed (from the bad blood of the birth). The old woman who assisted her took her prepartum clothing and threw it in the river, where it floated away or sank out of sight. (Women who could not afford a new set of clothes kept their old ones and were purified in [842] them.) The mother then returned home as if she were newly married. (It was at this time that a woman would begin the practice of birth control; for this purpose a mixture of plants having abortifacient or contraceptive properties was contained in a religious bundle of special design.)

824 Braids of sweet grass were tied vertically around the base of the Horn Society staffs. Braids were also strung on the inside of headbands of the Motokiks headdresses.

[825] One informant told us that the Owl and the Loon in the medicine pipes owned the sweet grass and that the bear owned the juniper; but we have not

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

moccasins. Their bodies are painted yellow, even the hair. Some say they were marked down with the finger. They did not have the red marks on their faces like the leaders. They carried bows and arrows and wore eagle tail-feathers on their heads. Their special functions seem to have been to serve the food at the ceremonial feast, to act as messengers or sergeants-at-arms. On the back of their heads they wore eagle tail-feathers painted red (Fig. 2). [561] [575] [796] [411] [292] [302]

The rank and file, or the pigeons proper, are not permitted to wear clothes, except as for the yellow pigeons. Should anyone come to the dance tipi and refuse to go in the others would set upon him and tear his clothes off. Their entire bodies are painted red. They carry bows and arrows, painted red. [237]

The four old men members enter the ceremony in regular daily dress. They carry nothing with them. As a rule, they paint their faces red. These men are taken in because of their experience in ceremonial procedure and as one expressed it, "always to have some members who could count war deeds." They make all formal announcements, harangue the camp when required in the interests of the pigeons, advise the members, adjust disputes, etc. When the society sells out they tend to go with them in the same capacity; thus they are truly old men comrades. [302] [898] [887]

The four single men comrades are in this case very young boys, all the pigeons proper being unmarried men. They are taken in by their brothers or other relatives, already members, and may dance in their stead while they remain seated. These men paint and dress as the other members. Their designation is, of course, borrowed from societies of older men in which the members proper are of marriageable age.

The four drummers each has a drum in his hands. They are charged with directing the singing and during the dancing remain seated and drum and sing. There seems to be some difference of opinion as to whether it is proper to use drums or to beat a rawhide. Usually when singing and dancing, members keep time by beating upon their bows with an arrow. Some informants claim that this was the only kind of accompaniment used. The best informant, however, seemed to favor the use of four drums. [534]

There was one woman attached to this organization. We were told that, "she had no particular function, but was taken in as a member and danced with the rest." This will be better understood after reading the accounts of other societies.

The dance ceremony of this society takes place out-of-doors, the members arranging themselves as indicated in the sketch, Fig. 3. The opening in the circle is toward the east. The four yellow pigeons sit on the north side of this opening, while the bear shirts sit facing it some fifty feet distant. [535]

18: Wissler E-5 (1903-1912) 1913
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

575 561 [276] [591] The owner of the tipi in which the society usually meets, who is also one of the members, keeps a pipe and tobacco ready for use in the ceremonies. There is no special form of pipe, neither are there any peculiar smoking customs pertaining to this society. This individual does not buy his place by the regular transfer nor is he recognized as having any particular official status. Nevertheless, it is said that no matter where the ceremony is performed, this individual is expected to provide the pipe and care for it.

The lay members in this society are spoken of as the all-brave-dogs and are limited to twenty individuals. Some informants, however, deny that [424] there was any special number. Later on it will be shown that each lay [432] member purchased a particular rattle and since the rattles were, of course, of a definite number, the membership was limited thereby. The lay mem- [292] bers have no costume of any kind, but carry their blankets over their left [237] arms and their rattles in their right hands. On the back of the head each wears a feather.

[534] An interesting point is that the face painting is determined by the painting upon the rattle as shown in Fig. 10. The rattles vary greatly in their [531] painting. Each individual therefore, paints his face according to the [302] painting upon the rattle he owns. No one now living recalls any symbolic significance for the painting on the rattles other than that it furnishes the copy for face painting. There is no special myth accounting for their origin. [796] When the paint rubs off or it becomes necessary to repaint the rattle, the former owner of it must be called upon to perform this service. He will count war deeds and perform other ceremonies after which he paints the [787] rattle. For this he must receive liberal fees. It was said that the person who first "dreamed the society" directed that the rattles be painted in this way.

[887] The old men comrades are expected to give advice in the conduct of the various ceremonies, one of whom is expected to act as a herald and to ride [203] about the camps calling the society together whenever a meeting is desired. [534] These men have no particular costume, but each has a rattle, and may wear a feather at the back of his head.

[292] The single men comrades are required to perform certain services such [237] as gathering food and receiving presents. Each has a rattle according to which he paints and otherwise dresses according to his taste. The society [556] usually elects the sons of prominent families, since they not only have fine costumes, but since their relatives are apt to make liberal presents to the society.

[796] [535] A tipi for the society's ceremonies is set up inside the camp circle. This is usually the tipi of one of the bear-all-brave-dogs, though other members

Black coffee or tea is often drunk instead of plain water, though most everyone knows that water is healthier. 512 272

Two more criers made their way around the camp circle. One announced the name of the person whose tipi would be the meeting place for the future Horns. The other crier called out the names of two members, inviting one to visit the other. Even though PitachPikis was recognized as the camp's main crier, anyone could announce something the others should know. Generally, certain recognized Old Men were asked to make the announcements. For this favor they were given a present of tobacco, food, or money. 512 203 [887] [431]

It was about midday when SikskiAki lit our fire again to put a kettle of soup over it. Earlier, we had invited our friend Albert Wolf Child to come over for lunch and a visit. Albert is the grandson of the man whose common name, Wolf Child, is now a last name for his descendants. When our People first settled on the reserve, government officials arbitrarily assigned family names based on the common name of the head of the family. Unfortunately, the man who interpreted all these names was not fully familiar with the complicated Blackfoot language. He was a Negro named Dave Mills, who was married to a Blood woman. His descendants are now active members of the tribe. Dave Mills was well liked by the Old People, even though he did not adopt their traditions. They gave him the name Young Scabby Bull. 512 [574] 551 553 [563]

WOLF OLD MAN VISITS

While SikskiAki went next door to invite PitachPikis to join us, Albert Wolf Child arrived. He hesitated until I pointed to the seat at my left. Just as he sat down, the door curtain opened wide. It was our grandfather, Wolf Old Man, thrusting his two canes through the opening and carefully lifting his legs over the canvas that formed the base of the doorway. His brother, his 574

companion, Mike Yellow Bull, held him steady from behind until he was safely inside. Slowly, he walked around the fireplace toward me. 574

"*T'kcha?*"—Who is that?—the Old Man called out, as he pointed to Albert with one of his canes. In our tipi, he always sits at the place of honor, immediately to my left, where Albert was sitting. [576]

"Makwi Poka," Albert replied. The Old Man was momentarily confused, since our little boy, also named Makwi Poka, usually sits at my right. Then he recognized the voice and said, "Oh, my old son-in-law," his tone implying that he should have known who it was. He was referring to Albert's first marriage to his daughter, Victoria.

Albert got up and we helped the Old Man sit down in the honored place. At ninety-four, his vigorous outdoor life had helped him grow old in good health. Although his eyes were nearly worn out and his knees were weak, he was one of the few Old People who could sit through our all-night ceremonies and still be alert and joking when Sun came up in the morning. 887 ● 147

The Old Man was the last holy man to follow the Old Ways of our People. He had spent his lifetime giving spiritual guidance to our People, doctoring them when their health failed, and leading their ceremonies when they came together to pray. 793 756

He had been born in the year 1877. His father's name was also Wolf Old Man, and his mother was the younger of Wolf Old Man's two wives. Not long after our Old Man's birth, Wolf Old Man died. Our Old Man's mother then mar- 551 [587]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 13A]

some of his fine-cut tobacco. "Oki, here is a smoke," he told Worm, and went home. 173 539 778

When his wives returned, they found weapons and moccasins but not their husband. In earlier times, if a person went out to look after his horses on a rainy day, he went barefoot so as not to spoil his moccasins. The wives said, "Here are his moccasins, and here is his knife, and he didn't take his bow and arrow. Maybe he went out for a while."

Soon the man returned and told his wives, "I am tired. I will sleep here alone and tomorrow we will invite some people."

In the morning his wives boiled some meat and he went out and invited seven Old People. They came in, they sat down, and they ate. When they got through, he told them, "Oki, you Old Men, I will tell you a story and you will tell me what is to be done." [987]

The man then told his story of how Worm had sung to him and given him a Pipe. He told them, "Last night I slept alone. I burned incense. As I slept I saw the Pipe. It was given to me and I heard the songs clearly. It was an ordinary smoking pipe, only it was decorated with feathers at the bud. Oki, Old Men, make your decisions on what is to be done." [787]

So the Old Men thought. After a time, each one said, "Let it be done this way," or "Let it be done that way." One of the men was an important Medicine Pipe Man. He advised, "This pipe will be decorated at the bud with flared feathers strung together and then it will be a Medicine Pipe. But it will not be taken as the regular Medicine Pipes are taken."

The first person to take the Pipe wasn't the man who had the vision. A young married man took it first. The man who had the vision knew the songs, so he transferred them to the first Owner of the Small Medicine Pipe. The young married man provided food and the Small Medicine Pipe was transferred to him. [425]

The young man didn't have his Pipe very long when the man who had the vision stole it and

[Horns Society Transfer Ceremony, 1972]

have carefully traced the disposition of all the missing society Bundles, locating ten of them, and, as of this writing, are negotiating for their return to the society. 575 186

For some time before last summer's Horns membership transfer ceremony, families of the new members went around the camp circle, one at a time, displaying their payments for the membership. Old People walked ahead of each procession, calling out the name of the new member and singing words of praise for him. Mokakin was the most popular man in camp for this duty, and before long his voice was so hoarse and broken he could barely be heard. Among the processions he led was one for Ponah's nephew, Cyril Red Crow. To help him with his payments, his sister and her husband, Stabs Down, paid the quarter horse we had given to them some time earlier when we took our Medicine Pipe. Most of the horses shown as payments were covered with fine blankets, while those who led them wore buckskin suits and eagle feather headdresses. All these goods were to be given as payments. 575 432 [424] [887] [292]

The transfer ceremony was held inside a fenced circular enclosure. Spectators crowded outside to see functions similar to those described by Wilson. Within the enclosure was a large crowd of old members, new members, and former members, all with their wives. The former members served as advisors to both old and new members. A couple of the retiring members were South Piegans who had come up for the occasion from Montana. 575 432 796 [484]

When the new members had made their rounds outside the camp circle, they were preceded by their leaders, one on a black horse and one on a white, just as Wilson observed. The dance leader wore the ancient headdress with a feather stuck in the front to represent the arrow once shot into the forehead of a long-ago, similarly headdressed dance leader. The original arrow remained lodged in its place while the wearer of the headdress led his party of Bloods to a victory against the enemy. This battle and victory are re- [292] [541]

[p. 210-B]

[Horns Society Transfer Ceremony, 1972]

575
432

Atsitsina and relatives displaying the saddle horse, shawl, and headdress being paid by Fred Eagle Plume for his membership in the Horns. [435] [424]

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enacted during each summer's dance, the symbolic battle ending when the leader fires his gun into the air and charges through the crowd of children, who are the "enemy." 575 432 796

As part of their performance, the Horns gave away rations of food to all the adults in the crowd. At the same time, the staffs of the two leaders were blessed by two old men who each called out four brave deeds. The leader's Swan Staff was brought to our Old Man; it had once been his, when he had been leader of the Horns. He called out four exploits of horse raiding, and said a prayer. The other staff was taken to Ben Calf Robe, the old man who had come down to visit the encampment from his home on the North Blackfoot Reserve. He had also been a member of the Horns Society, which is now inactive there. [541] [431] [782] [555] [887]

[p.211-A]

Weasel Tail concluded this fantastic adventure by locating a Crow camp and, while his wife waited in the nearby timber, he and the other man managed to steal fourteen good horses and they all returned home safely. 721

Weasel Tail also told Apikunni that he had been on very many raids, and that he had counted one or more coups on ten of them. He said that not all of his raids were successful, but that he always came back home safely. His favorite time to go on a raid was during the winter, when there was a chance of snowfall to cover his retreating tracks. He counted his final coup around the end of the war years, along the Belly River not far from Stand Off. He met a Kutenai man on a butte by the river. The man had three horses with him. Some say he had just stolen them, others say he was coming to trade them to the Bloods. At any rate, Weasel Tail prayed before the fight and said that this would be his last killing. He was the winner of the fight, and the place is today still known as Kutenai Butte. [554] [782] [103]

In later years, Weasel Tail was a frequent participant at Sun Dance Encampments, powwows, and other gatherings of Old People. He was often called on to relate his exploits so that the ceremonies could proceed. 887

CALF SHIRT AND HIS RATTLESNAKES

Calf Shirt was one of the last of our Old People who could prove to skeptics, including white people, the Power of his own Medicine. His sacred helper was a rattlesnake, and he always carried a live one with him until his death, not long after 1900. 756 [231]

Most of the Blood Reserve is not troubled with rattlesnakes, but at the north end, near the city of Lethbridge, they are very common. At the narrow head of a long and steep box canyon there 136

[READ CONTINUED ON PAGE 270-B]

[p. 269-13]

large party of Gros Ventres, who commenced shooting at them . . . they firing in return, saw some of the enemy drop; they continued to retreat, and noticing two Indians in the trail in front of them, they pursued them and killed one of them. . . . They however, arrived on the Blood Reserve with five of the stolen horses and one stray horse. . . . Owners for these horses have not yet been found. . . . They are at present running with our herd here. 657 721

CRAZY CROW'S STORY

In conclusion to the story of the last real war party, let's hear Crazy Crow's version as told in a letter to Mrs. Walters by his daughter, Mrs. Ethel Tailfeathers. The letter accompanied Crazy Crow's yellow feather mascot, which was sold to Mrs. Walters upon Crazy Crow's death in the 1930s. 127 212 [439]

I was only 16 when I went on my first warpath. My father was not very keen on my going so young. He would say, "Son, there is plenty of time for you." But my spirit of adventure was too strong. I would not listen. So my father invited one of the very old timers of the camp to come and pray, paint, advise and impart his blessing on me. He sang the war song as he was tying the eagle feathers and dipped them in his yellow war paint and tied them on my head; all the while praying that the mascot on my hair would keep me from all harm of the enemy and bring me success in raids among other tribes. 883 721 [887] [726] [789] [237] [533] [301]

When we go out to raid we do not set out to kill, but to raid and only kill in self defense. We put on our best regalia so that if we get killed, the enemy will have something worthwhile. I went with an older friend [Calf Robe]; he would look after me as he had experience. I rode on a gray horse and the enemy was on a pinto. I especially wanted a pinto as a pinto is dear to the heart of an Indian. It was worth risking a life to secure

to try and get their sacred Bundles back. A Medicine Pipe Owner we used to think was very holy. He dressed holy and acted holy. Nowadays they don't behave like the ones from the past. The People don't find them very holy any more. . . . But maybe things will get better again. If we start to live a holy life again, maybe there won't be so many deaths. In the past there were not many sudden deaths; the People lived in a holy way then. . . . In the Old Days the Old People often followed both religions. They liked to go wherever there was praying. Now not only the Indian religion is being forgotten, the white religion is falling the same way.

ALBERT CHIEF CALF

Two of our Old People who still attend every ceremony are Mr. and Mrs. Albert Chief Calf. The old man was born in a tipi in 1895. He is known by his father's name, NinnaOnesta, or "Chief Calf"; his other name is Wrapped Up. His wife's name is Little Nice Face. The two make a distinctive couple on their daily walk through town—he is over six feet tall and sturdy-looking; his wife is quite short and plump. He usually wears an old black cowboy hat with an eagle plume attached; she always covers herself with a woolen shawl.

Although NinnaOnesta has attended ceremonies of our Old Ways all his life, he has been leading them for only the past few years. Last winter he alone led more Nighttime ceremonies than all the other leaders. He is always available for praying and is very easy to please and willing to please. He wears sunglasses because of his poor eyesight, which allows him to overlook details and distractions that would bother other leaders.

NinnaOnesta went on a number of raids during his young days, but like most of our Old People, he has said, "I can just talk about my raids when I am confessing them during holy ceremonies. I can't talk about them just any-

GUY WOLF CHILD

Guy Wolf Child, at ninety-two years, is usually the oldest dancer at our ceremonies. Until a couple of years ago, he came to the dance circle dressed in only a breechcloth and moccasins, his face and body painted, and carrying two or three large willow hoops so that he could do one more encore of the old hoop dance. He used to keep up to six hoops moving on each of his arms and legs, as well as one on his head, each hand, and waist.

Today, Guy Wolf Child is white-haired and blind. He usually sits quietly in the corner of a room and tries not to trouble anyone. If there is any sign of drunkenness, he asks to be escorted outside and away from the house. When we came to see him, he was thrilled to have company. He made sure he knew who everyone was, and said, "When we meet we shake hands. That is the way we have relatives. That is the only way that I will know them now." We told him about the nice photo of his father, old Wolf Child, and he asked if we had it with us. He told us, "Lay it in my lap so that I can at least touch the picture of my father, since I can no longer see it."

We asked him what thoughts about the past made him happy, and he replied as follows:

I always enjoy thinking about the past, back when I was young and could dance good. I don't remember the times before I went to school too well. I don't know how long I was in school, but I remember that when I came out, the modern life had started. Things already seemed very modern to me. I used to do all kinds of work for different white men, they used to treat us pretty good back then.

All things are different today. In the Old Days we all wore leggings, only lately they started to wear pants. Even the Sun Dances are different today. Everyone used to get together for them when I was younger. We used to play a game with

23: Wissler E-4,5 (1902-ca.1911) 1918
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

old men on the west side of the center pole dance in their places. The rawhide held in front of them, hangs down like an apron. They beat time on it, holding the rawhide in one hand, and the rattles in the other. An old man counts deeds and marks out with a knife the fireplace and the booth for the weather dancers. These are dug while the dancing and shooting take place.[1]

The hole, or fire pit, is dug between the sun pole and the entrance to the dancing lodge. It is about three feet by two and "two hands" deep. A warrior is then called to start the fire. Warriors now come forward in turn to count their coups. In this a man took a piece of firewood and holding it up, called out in a loud voice how he once struck a Sioux, a Snake, etc., then placed it in the fire. When he had recounted all he gave way to the next. Stories are told of men having enough coups to make a fire large enough to threaten the destruction of the dancing lodge. We were able to confirm the statement of Clark[2] that the height of the flame as determined by a buffalo tail hanging down was the criterion for determining a great warrior. One informant states as follows:—

There is always a cow tail hanging down from the center post. In olden times this was a buffalo tail, to the end of which a blackened plume was tied. This hangs down over the fireplace which was used at night to furnish light for the proceedings. The assembled people were entertained by narratives of warriors as they came forward to narrate their deeds; each threw a stick on the fire for each deed counted and he whose fire blazed high enough to reach the tail was considered a great warrior. It was a great honor when a man could tell enough war deeds to scorch the tail. All this time there was singing (the cheering songs) and drumming, while berry soup was served to all. The persons taking part are designated as those "who are about to make the fire." In recent years, this ceremony has been performed in a very perfunctory manner.

After the ceremony, the fire was fed in the ordinary way and kept going during the greater part of the succeeding days. The origin of this dance is often ascribed to Scar-face.

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[1] It will be recalled that in the sun dance of the Dakota type (p. 110) there is a ceremonial shooting at the sun pole. Here the shooting takes place in a perfunctory way, while the pole is dragged to the sun dance site. Yet, McQueston claims to have witnessed the driving of evil power from the sun lodge at a Blood ceremony in 1912. ("The Sun Dance of the Blackfeet" *Rod and Gun in Canada*, March 1912.) As this is not noted in older accounts and we failed to get information as to it, we suspect it to be due to foreign influences, or perhaps the author's own interpretation.

[2] Clark, *ibid.*, 72.

24: Schultz F-3 (1877-1947) 1980 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

On several occasions I saw the girl standing with hands raised to the sky, praying for the safe return of her sweetheart as old Three Bears rode by shaking his rattle and calling upon all to pray for the absent ones. Beautiful, lissome she was. Her kindly, serious eyes, her every action bespoke the fact that here was a real woman.

Close back of camp, on the north side of the creek, was a high sandstone cliff, there lone old men were wont to sit, alert for signs of any approaching enemy, looking sadly down upon the activities of the great camp, off to the billowing plain, scene of many a successful hunt, of exciting adventure when they had been young and full of life. Early one morning, as Bear Head and I were going to the creek to bathe, there were three of the oldsters perched upon the cliff. Pointing to them, he said: "*Apikuni*, don't you dread the time when we, too, will be sitters upon cliffs, just feeble cliff-sitters, nothing more?"

"Let's not think of it," I answered.

We did not bathe that morning, for as we neared the creek the old men upon the cliff sprang up and stood alertly staring at the plain to the south, hands shading their eyes from the early sun; waved their wraps and shouted to attract our attention; and then in the sign language: "Pikunis coming; driving many horses; they are near." Whereat Bear Head and I ran back to camp, an excited camp, everyone staring at the south rim of the plain, excitedly talking; children bawling, dogs barking, horses prancing at the ends of their picket ropes. And presently appeared a big band of horses hurtling down the slope, the war party close following. They had stopped somewhere not far out and painted themselves and their mounts; put on their fringed and beaded and quilled war clothes and bonnets of eagle feathers. On they came, brandishing their weapons, holding aloft some scalps, singing fiercely the Victory Song. What a sight, a stirring sight, they were!

The women and children ran out across the flat to greet their returning husbands, fathers, brothers, sweethearts; surrounded and escorted them in, shouting their names, praising them for their bravery and success in despoiling the hated Crows. Meanwhile, the men in camp, standing before their lodges and enjoying the lively scene,

25: Ewers E,G-5 (1941-1951) 1963 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

BLACKFOOT INDIAN PIPES AND PIPEMAKING

By John C. Ewers

INTRODUCTION

The smoking of tobacco pipes played roles of importance in the religious, political, and social life of the historic Blackfoot Indians. Pipe smoking was an integral part of the involved ritual of opening sacred ceremonial bundles. It was an invariable part of the act of making peace with enemy tribes. In the early years of the fur trade Blackfoot chiefs smoked with white traders when they visited their posts before the exchange of goods began. An Indian whose word was doubted might solemnly swear by the pipe that his testimony was true. It was a common custom for a man seeking a favor of another Indian of his tribe to present him with a pipe at the time of making his request. If the pipe was accepted, he knew that his request would be acted upon favorably; if it was refused, he knew that it was denied.

Blackfoot etiquette called for the tipi owner to offer a pipe to male visitors to his lodge. However, my older informants of the 1940's stated that in their youth there were marked individual differences in the interest men took in smoking for pleasure. Some men rarely smoked except during their participation in ceremonies. Others spent a great deal of their leisure time puffing on their pipes. Most boys started to smoke when they reached their middle teens and began to join war parties. No ceremony was involved in a boy's taking his first smoke. He merely followed the actions he had so often seen his elders perform.

Strong arguments were used to discourage young men from smoking too much, as are indicated by the following Blackfoot sayings:

> A young man who smokes too much has no wind.
> If you smoke too much it will hurt your eyes.
> The man who likes to smoke too much is the man who will draw the enemy when he is on a war party. The enemy will smell the smoke and be attracted to his location. Wild game will smell the smoke and will avoid the place where he is.

Girls did not smoke. But young married women learned to smoke when they attended ceremonies with their husbands. Older women usually were the only ones of their sex who smoked for pleasure.

575 be got rid of by the making of the desired gift, but for
701 the annoyances the inmates of the lodge suffer by the un-
[431] ceremonious invasion they are entitled to treat the dog as if he were indeed the animal he impersonates and cuff and kick him to their hearts' content. This association is
[887] greatly dreaded. The old men have an organization known as the Bull Band. The Bulls have no special creed, but are old men of sense and discretion who have ceased to burn with the fire of military ardor but are yet fit for active service when it becomes needful or desirable. They number seventy or eighty members and are held in considerable repute and enjoy participation in the councils of the nation. Each tribe of the Blackfeet has its own Dog and Bull bands, but there is no connection between them.

CRIMES

692 If we except disobedience to the mandates of the Soldiers'
673 Lodge, the penalties for which we have already mentioned, there were among the Blackfeet no recognized public wrongs which the body politic, or state, as such was bound or expected to notice and mete out the punishment therefor.

[627] All crimes of whatever grade were purely private wrongs and for which the Blackfoot code provided no penalty but such as the injured party, himself, or his friends, was able to inflict.

674 And if we accept as crimes only those offenses for which custom had in some degree regulated the penalty, we find ourselves reduced to a list of ridiculously small proportions, comprehending in fact only larceny, adultery and homicide.
673 There were other wrongs which the individual might sus-
683 tain as assault and battery, or slander, but the injured party was left to inflict upon the offender such punishment as he chose or was able to inflict. And even larceny might with more propriety have been assigned to that class of wrongs, as reclamation of the property stolen was the only
685 positive right of the plundered party. Theft was rare except in case of horses, and even this species of property was only unlawfully taken from a fellow Blackfoot to enable the ambitious young warrior who had no horse of his own to secure a mount for a meditated foray or the love-sick swain

33: Bradley G-3 (1871-1877) 1923
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

726 contrary to the popular belief, the surprise of a village was
72 not difficult. In times of apprehended danger the young men would lie in concealment upon the outskirts of the camp, and were vigilant and effective sentinels. Neither did the camp maintain any system of outposts when its often vast herds of horses were grazed in the surrounding
233 valleys and upon the hill tops. Each family looked after
231 its own interests in this respect, driving its horses where it will, and leaving them at pleasure, unprotected or watched by
[887] some member of the lodge, usually a boy or woman. Sometimes some old warrior, incapacitated for more worthy service, had a general superintendence of the boy herders, seeing that they did not stray too far or loiter too long when the hour arrived for driving the herds into the village. Usually the horses were all brought in before night and picketed in
[417] the vicinity of the lodges. Horse corrals were sometimes
[462] made of small poles by the united labors of the squaws of the village within which the horses of the whole village were nightly assembled. When no danger was apprehended, bands of horses were sometimes driven to a secluded place
[721] and left for days together without a guard. It is thus seen why a daring war party could successfully approach within the vicinity of a village and drive off the outlying bands of horses which were ever such a temptation to the enterprising and adventurous brave.

Division of Labor

462 The women performed all the drudgery of camp. The only occupations reserved to the men were war and the chase.

Smallpox Among the Blackfeet

164 Smallpox visited the Blackfeet a second time in the year 1849 and again in 1869-70. No account of losses in the first case has been recorded.

PRESENT STRENGTH OF THE BLACKFEET

162 Major Culbertson says the Blackfeet now (1876) number three hundred lodges; Bloods, three hundred, averaging six persons to a lodge.

54: Lancaster F-3(1958-1966)1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Piegan
Montana

over a drying line the whole thing unfolds into one large, almost transparently thin sheet. Agnes Morning Gun is a real expert at the cutting. Before beginning, she knotted her long braids behind her neck so that they would not dangle in the meat as she bent to her work. The Chief is pretty good too, and he is cutting away very efficiently—apparently in seventh heaven. I don't recall ever having seen him quite so contented. Somehow he reminds me of those sheep dogs (no derogatory implications, certainly)—happy in the capable performance of a useful occupation. Frankly I have no special sympathy for our unhappy "senior citizens." I know plenty of older people—Cap Fowler and the Chief, for instance—that lead happy and meaningful lives, and all of these happy oldsters have one thing in common: they have developed the ability to be interested in something besides themselves. If you are miserable at 65, it is a pretty good bet that you were miserable at 45—and at 25—and for the same reason. If you spend your whole life catering solely to your own physical appetites, and if and when these appetites pall—and they are bound to—then you are left floundering in the lumpy emotional bed of your own making. And whose fault is it but your own! "They buttered their bed and they can lay on it," Ernie says. (Ernie and brother Jim really must get together sometime.)

Mrs. Morning Gun says that in the old days the smoking of meat while it was drying served a double purpose: it helped to cure the meat and it kept the flies away. This comment was apropos of the swarms of flies that have invaded the house since the arrival of the meat, especially since Jimmy has left the tripe uncovered in the pantry (perhaps to ripen?). I don't care; I just won't eat any. Jim, by the way, showed me a better way to kill flies. Instead of smacking them with a folded road map, I now snap them with a strip of inner-tube. It is more sporting this way, and I don't break so many things. Thus far today I have killed exactly one million. Joe M. G. said, with reference to the flies, "It don't spoil it that meat."

I certainly like the Morning Guns, but we have a serious problem in communication. My Blackfoot is pretty pidgin, and so is their English. The Blackfoot equivalent of "Gee" is "D-e-e-e," and this is the usual response of the Morning Guns to my questions and comments.

Agnes said, "Did you ever cut that dry meat next day have him over again?"

I said, "How do you cook dry meat?"

In reply, the Morning Guns laughed good-heartedly. Joe said